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Christmas Greeting

THE first Christmas, despite the beauty of its meaning and the poetry which has gathered round it, had a dark background. The Roman world was confused with turmoil and Palestine was full of cruelty when Christ was born.

Let us not consider Christmas, then, a strange event in this troubled, tragic year. It belongs here. It is at home in chaos. Christ came not because the world was just, merciful, and at peace, but because it desperately needed a saviour to redeem it.

In such a mood of serious gratitude your ministers and the members of your church's staff welcome the celebration of the Master's birthday and send you all their loyal greeting. May we in this fellowship lift high this year the old message ever true that unto us is born this day in the City of David a Saviour who is Christ the Lord.

God Talks to a Dictator

SERMON BY HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

THIS is not the first time in history that the world has faced the military conquests of dictators. Long ago a Hebrew prophet lived through an era like ours, when his people were assailed by the Assyrians, but unlike most of us he achieved a standpoint from which to view the scene, that was distinctive of his religious prophethood—he heard God talking to the dictator.

Granted that in an absolute and literal sense no man can know what God would say to any one! Yet this is one of man's distinctive attributes, that he can erect himself higher than himself and see the situations that confront him, not simply from a level stance but from above, as they might look to God. That is what a prophet is for—to help people see their contemporary world in wide perspective from a height, as God might see it. So Isaiah heard God talking to the dictator.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

So Judea lay under the thralldom of a conqueror, and in distress and confusion, as among us now, every one was talking about him and to him. But history has thought it worth while to record only what the prophet heard God say to him: "Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation!"

See what that means! The Jews hated that conqueror. He seemed altogether wild and lawless; he threatened their temple and their culture; his victory meant to them the downfall of their choicest values. He was to them anti-God, as though some volcanic evil, some demonic force, had escaped from God's control and was running amuck in the world. They felt about him as we feel about Hitler. Then Isaiah heard God talking to him, calling him, as Dr. Moffatt translates it, "my club in anger, the rod I wield in wrath." So that dictator was not merely wild and lawless; he had not escaped the sovereignty of God; he was a rod in God's hands; God had picked him up; God was using him; God could lay him down again. The dictator himself did not know this. Says Isaiah: "other plans has he, and other aims!" But even amid his devastations God talked to him as though to say, You are my instrument; I am using you; I took you up, and I can throw you down.

Like all typical religious language this is picturesque metaphor and simile, but it means something, I am sure, profoundly true and pertinent to our case today.

In the first place, Isaiah saw God using that conqueror as a just punishment on Judea for its sins. "Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger." That was a dreadful thing for the prophet to have to say to his own

people, but he said it. He was like a faithful psychiatrist dealing with one of us when we blaze out with indignation against some one who, we think, is wronging us. For the psychiatrist says, Wait a moment; that was your own fault; you brought that on yourself. So Isaiah spoke to the people. They suffered their tragedy, he said, because they deserved it.

My friends, unless we can see that truth about ourselves today, I am sure we have missed the major meaning of our catastrophe, and the only hope of a worth while outcome. We brought this disaster upon ourselves.

As a matter of historic fact, it was only by giving that interpretation to the conquerors that the Jewish people achieved in the end the monotheism they have bequeathed to us. For in those days the theory was that there were many gods, each nation having its own deities, and the theological question then was not whether there were many gods, but which nation's gods were most real and powerful. The answer to that polytheistic question was naturally made evident in war. If one nation conquered another, clearly the gods of the conquerors were real and strong, and the gods of the conquered weak. So when Assyria triumphed over Judea, the popular conclusion was swift and clear—the gods of Assyria must be real; the gods of Israel must be futile. Monotheism never could have come from that interpretation of the conqueror.

The great prophets gave us monotheism because they saw the conqueror from another point of view. They said not that he disproved the one true God, but that he represented the inevitable punishment of the one true God on his people's sin. The victory of Assyria was to the prophets not evidence of God's weakness or abdication, but of God's terrific reality as the impartial administrator of ethical cause and consequence. The one God of Israel, they cried, is still the God of all the world, but he is a God of moral law; not even a chosen people can escape his punishments! When, then, the Assyrian conquered Judea, and all the people were tempted to cry, That proves the gods of Assyria to be real! the prophet said, Rather that proves that we have sinned, and that the eternal God of righteousness plays no favorites in this world, but brings down his judgment even on Judea when she rebels.

As a matter of historic fact that is the way we got monotheism—from prophets penitent enough to acknowledge that their catastrophe was the one God's just punishment on their own people's sin. And that is not ancient history. Some today say that Hitler and Mussolini prove that the gods of Nazism and Fascism are the real and true gods. Others say that these conquerors with their cruel devastations prove that there is no God at all. The prophetic vision is needed afresh to see that what the dictators really prove is that we all have sinned, that this is a morally law-abiding world, that cause does bring consequence, that God cannot be mocked, that our present tragedy is the inevitable result of our joint guilt.

There are many things in these troubled days that the church cannot do to help. It is not our function, nor within our competence, to pass judgment on many an urgent question, but some things are the church's special business, and none, I think, more crucial and important than to keep penitence alive in this situation. Said a

wise friend to me this last week, "If all of us could go to the counsel table after this war is over in the spirit of penitence, there might be some hope." Well, without that there can be no hope at all.

Moreover, we of the democracies should be especially penitent. We won the last war. With utter and crushing completeness we won it. Never forget that. Endure, if you can, the reading of one paragraph from President Wilson's announcement of the Armistice to Congress in 1918: "We know that the object of the war is attained; the object upon which all free men had set their hearts; and attained with a sweeping completeness which even now we do not realize. Armed imperialism such as the men conceived who were but yesterday the masters of Germany is at an end, its illicit ambitions engulfed in black disaster. Who will now seek to revive it? The arbitrary power of the military caste of Germany which once could secretly and of its own single choice disturb the peace of the world is discredited and destroyed. And more than that—much more than that—has been accomplished." So completely did we, the democracies, win the war. We were in charge of the world. We could do what we would. As to what we did and did not do, the bill of particulars has been written again and again, and I know no judgment more unanimous than this—that we of the democracies are more responsible for the rise of the dictators than the plain people of the dictatorships themselves. Penitence becomes us well.

There are many angles from which one can look at Hitler and Mussolini today. I am not denying the truth in any of them, but they are partial and incomplete unless we humbly and penitently recognize that the dictators have come as an inevitable consequence of our joint sin, unless we hear, as it were, the moral order of this universe talking to them, saying, "Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine anger."

Now such penitence is not at home in war time. In war time pride is at home. Today pride rules our wills. In picking out sin and distributing blame we practise selective attention. We can easily see the iniquities of every one except ourselves and our friends. We Christians should do better than that, as Lincoln did during the Civil War. I commend his spirit to you: "If God wills that . . . all the wealth piled by the bondman's two-hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and . . . every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword; as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, 'The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'"

In the second place, however, this address of God to the dictator implies another meaning, namely, that God is employing the dictator to some good purpose of his own. When the populace upon the common levels saw the conqueror's victory, they cried, All is lost! But the prophets did not. God had picked up that rod of Assyria, they said; he would do something with it before he laid it down. They found, that is, not only humility and penitence, but courage and hope in the sovereignty of God.

There is a strange verse in one of the Psalms addressed to the Lord which says, "the wrath of man shall praise thee." How can that be true? It says that God can take man's evil and use it, that in his hands even man's wrath and

iniquity are not a total loss. It says that God can use downright sin, as though a piece of grit that did not belong there, getting into an oyster shell, the oyster could make into a pearl after all. How can that be true about sin? Yet, where would we be in personal life if that were not true? When a man sins, need that be a total loss? No, not necessarily a total loss. It may seem dangerous for a preacher to give that answer, but it is the true one. Even downright wickedness need not be a total loss.

Did that Prodigal Son, for example, learn nothing in the far country that God could put to good use afterwards? He learned a lot that boys who stay at home never know. It was dreadful. Only a fool would go through what he went through for the sake of learning it. But when in after days some boy was tempted to seek the far country, who was it in that Jewish town that best could help him? That Prodigal. He knew. He could put his very sin to use for the sake of God and of that other boy now tempted. We are often told that we ought to capitalize our troubles, and transform them into sympathy, understanding, and increased usefulness. That is true also about our sin. Here it is, a great mistake, a wrong committed. It is a loss, but thank God it need not be a total loss. Capitalize it. There are some people we especially can help because of it. God can use it. He can make even the wrath of men praise him.

Even unredeemed sinners God uses. We constantly and rightly exalt the ways in which God has used Christ, his perfect instrument. Yes, but he has used Judas Iscariot too. Some one, I suppose, had to try that experiment of betraying Christ, and stand there, an example of the way such betrayal looks when seen in the retrospect of history. How many of us, then, in some pinch in our lives when we have been tempted to betray Christ, have thought of Judas, and have said, No! not that! I'll not do that! God can use even Judas.

I am pleading for what our fathers called an overruling Providence, as though man's wickedness, like a stream, could indeed go wild, break its banks, and let loose a torrential flood, but lo! there is a lie of the land that gets control in the end, a limit beyond which no stream's wildness can go, a contour to the landscape, a shape to the eternal hills, a declivity in the valleys, that at last bring even the wildest streams to terms and force them into channels that they did not choose. That fact about the world the great prophets saw. "Ho Assyrian!"

As a matter of history, this has been true in man's public affairs. The Roman Empire was a vast imperialism, cruel, selfish, bloody. Was it a total loss? Far from it! God used Rome for an overriding of racial and national boundaries, a unifying of the known world, a creative building of law and order, to which we still are incalculably indebted. The French Revolution was terrible, with the tumbrils rolling down Parisian streets, and the heads falling daily beneath the guillotine. Was it a total loss? Far from it! In the retrospect of history, it left gains that cannot be measured. Hitler and Mussolini represent everything that most we fear and hate in public life. Will they be a total loss? Not unless history reverses itself. My friends, a radical change in the world order has been long overdue. Our military and economic imperialisms, our subjugation of native peoples, our insane tariff barriers, our unjust division

of the world's resources, have long cried out for change. We the democracies might have done it peacefully, but alas! we failed. Now the dictators come. They are to me as terrible as they are to you, but be sure of this, in the retrospect of history they will not be a total loss. God is saying to them today, Ho Assyrian, my rod!

Indeed, has it not occurred to us that Hitler may turn out to be a powerful, even though unintentional friend of democracy? For consider! We in the democracies were slipping. Indeed, we were! We were taking democracy for granted. Was it not a lovely way of living that our fathers had bequeathed to us? What we could get out of it, not what we should dedicate to it, was foremost in our thoughts. Our life in this country had become undisciplined, soft, indulgent, careless, and what we took so easily for granted we had forgotten deeply and sacrificially to value. But now democracy is in danger, and there has been in the United States more care about it, more study of what it means, more concern over its foundations, more sense of its value in the last year than in many a year before. Alas! we never value anything as we should until we face the peril of losing it. That is true even in the family, where some loved person who for years has been safely at our side, who has been assumed as part of the scenery of our life, falls ill, and we wake up to see how carelessly we have been taking for granted one whom we so easily might lose. So today we feel about democracy. It has become to us a very dear thing. We have faced the possibility of seeing democracy crushed, and we have said that democracy should not die as long as free spirits were left in the world. Who has wrought this change? Hitler. What then? Am I saying, Thank God for Hitler? Far from it, but thank God for God, who towers above Hitler, who can use him, despite himself, for causes that he has no mind to serve. Thank God for that lie of the land that no overflowing flood can ultimately escape, but that will turn the wildest currents to channels that not they but God chooses!

See what I am pleading for—faith in the God of history. Throughout my ministry two aspects of God have been predominant in my thought and preaching—the God of nature, and the God of inner personal experience. But in these days another aspect of deity grows imperative—the God of history. Not to be identified with any national policy, not even with our own, the God of history sitteth above the circle of the earth, and the nations are accounted as a drop in the bucket. And there he is today, and his word to the dictators has not lost its power: Ho Assyrian, my rod!

This leaves us a brief moment for the final truth involved in the prophet's insight. When God picks up a rod, he can throw it down again. He always has. These rods of his, these conquerors that seem so strong, one by one have been thrown down. God picked them up. Well, then, "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? shall the saw magnify itself against him that wieldeth it?"

One of the great passages in Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables* is his description of the Battle of Waterloo. Recall how it ends: "Was it possible for Napoleon to win the battle? We answer in the negative. Why? On account of Wellington, on account of Blücher? No; on account of God. . . . When the earth is suffering from an excessive burden, there are mysterious groans from the

shadow, which the abyss hears. Napoleon had been denounced in infinitude, and his fall was decided. He had angered God." Well, Napoleon himself had an intimation of this fact, for he said once: "As long as I am necessary, no power in the world will be able to brush me aside. But the moment I become unnecessary, an atom will be enough to smash me."

I am not saying that in this grim crisis that confronts the world we can shoulder off on God all the responsibility of getting rid of the conquerors, as though he would settle everything. We have our tasks, many and imperative, to make these dictators unnecessary and impossible. But if we are to have strength for them, we need to see and hear more than the daily news brings to our eyes and ears. Not we humans alone, but God also is talking to the dictators, and in the broad perspective of history it is not too difficult to discover what he is saying: Ho Assyrian, the rod of mine indignation, the punishment of the world's sins! He is saying that. I am using you, and, far beyond your will, you will serve my purposes and not be a total loss. He is saying that. But he is saying also, When I am through with you, you are done! No wild stream, however madly it grows turbulent, can in the end escape the lie of my land.

Ah, Christ! How utterly different you are from the dictators! How weak today you often seem in comparison with them! Yet the long perspectives of history suggest another judgment.

I saw the conquerors riding by
With cruel lips and faces wan:
Musing on kingdoms sacked and burned
There rode the Mongol Ghengis Khan.

And Alexander, like a god,
Who sought to weld the world in one;
And Caesar with his laurel wreath;
And like a thing from Hell the Hun;

And, leading like a star, the van,
Heedless of upstretched arm and groan,
Inscrutable Napoleon went,
Dreaming of empire, and alone. . . .

Then all they perished from the earth,
As fleeting shadows from a glass,
And, conquering down the centuries,
Came Christ the Swordless on an ass.

Dr. Fosdick preached the foregoing sermon October 13, 1940.

▽ ▽ ▽

Prayer

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

O God, very great yet very near, it is our insensitiveness that makes us unaware of Thee. Thou art the order of the universe, the purpose in history, the spirit in man. Wherever goodness is, or truth, or beauty, there Thou art. Thou art far above us, yet deep within us, and at our best, it is not man that lives, but Thou that livest in him, and all our highest is but Thine influence in our hearts. Make sensitive our spirits that we may not live blindly unaware of our divine environment. Make real to us the surrounding and impinging spiritual world of Thy grace and power, that we may be cleansed and strengthened.

Awaken Thou from their sleep and lethargy the noblest elements of our spirits. Awaken courage, for it is in us though it sleeps. We are children of sires who in fearful days dared the wrath of devils and the scorn of men. Measure us with the tasks of our time, and make us not unworthy of those forefathers and foremothers of our race who were strong and unafraid.

Awaken Thou our faith, for it is there though it slumbers. We know that this is not the end of history. We know that Thy hand is not shortened that it cannot save. Out of the travail of many a tumultuous age a great birth has come. Keep our faith steady, lest, for the lack of it, we lose what Thou dost intend in this prophetic time.

Awaken goodwill, we beseech Thee, for though it sleeps it still is in our hearts. We are weary of the bitterness and ill will of our days. Spirit of the Lord Christ, who didst come to this world in a day of war, and art now remembered and adored while the warriors long since have fallen and been forgotten, be real to us! In a world that has become a neighborhood where we must make it a brotherhood or perish, join us to that saving minority that across the boundaries of prejudice, intolerance, and hatred, extends the dominion of understanding and goodwill.

God of all mankind, we lift before Thee in our prayer all the souls of our race. Often hast Thou led Thy people out of Egypt by way of the wilderness to the Promised Land, and lo! we are in the wilderness again. We beseech Thee make it a path to the Promised Land. Punish our iniquities, chasten us by our difficulties, strip us of our illusions, humble us under Thy hand, but still through the wilderness lead us toward a better land. And even in our own days, from some crest of Nebo let us by faith see it across Jordan.

Come close to us one by one, for we can do nothing together unless singly we are clean and strong. Look Thou into the hearts of Thy people worshiping here, and see the things that we would hide even from Thine eyes—our sins, our temptations, our despondencies, our infidelities, our thoughtlessness, our despairs. Come close to us in bereavement, anxiety, and moral failure. Let the spirit of the Lord our God rest in healing on some stricken life, in encouragement on some despondent soul, that we may rise up like sons and daughters of God and go forth to live, worthy of the high vocation by which we have been called in Christ Jesus. Amen.

The One Hundredth Anniversary Retirement Fund—Why and What Is It?

Mr. Rockefeller and His Committee Answer These Questions

A RETIREMENT FUND is called for in The Riverside Church—

First, because the salaries of our more than seventy employees, from the ministerial staff to the porters and cleaners, are modest; therefore, there is little margin to provide for old age.

Secondly, one of our employees is now over eighty years of age; several are about at retirement age; one or two have already been obliged to retire because of ill health. Either we must each year set up a special fund to meet such needs or adopt a pension plan.

Thirdly, while the law obliging employers to provide pensions for their employees in business has not yet been extended to include philanthropic and religious institutions, it is highly probable that before many years it will be so extended.

Very properly, the question is raised, "How has the church managed without such a fund in the past?" Heretofore, when a faithful employee has been obliged to give up work either because of age or ill health, some special monetary consideration has been provided. Such considerations have differed with each case and have been based upon the need of the employee, his ability to care for himself, and the extent to which his family was able to provide for his old age. These adjustments have, of course, been arbitrary—not alike in any two cases but made according to the trustees' best judgment as to what was right and fair. This is the practice followed by the great majority of churches.

In the light of the large increase in the adoption of pension plans in business and the growing feeling that some provision for old age is an appropriate concern of the employer, the trustees felt that as The Riverside Church has set standards in many other fields of religious work and management, so it should be a leader in this one.

In view of the above and after several years of careful study, the trustees have reached the conclusion that a pension plan offered the best permanent solution of this very real problem.

The following letter from a member of the church, who has just pledged ten dollars to the Retirement Fund, indicates what the church means to her and how happy she is to have a part in this fund. The sixteen odd thousand dollars remaining to be raised to complete our $100,000 goal would be quickly secured were we all as loyal:

> "Thank you for the nice letter of October 10th acquainting me with the hundredth anniversary.
>
> "I am always proud to tell people I am a member of Riverside Church, but ashamed that I do so little to help this wonderful institution. However, I shall be happy to send you my widow's mite as soon as possible and before July 1, 1941."

Let us seek to answer the question, "What is the Retirement Fund?"

The pension plan contemplated will include all employees who join it, making equalizing adjustments in the case of those who are already in some existing old-age plan. The amount payable to each employee on retirement will be based on the number of years of service and the salary received. It will at best be a very modest amount. Employees entering the plan will pay one-half of the current cost of carrying it, the Church the other half.

The ultimate goal of $250,000 included a lump sum cash payment of over $100,000 to the insurance company operating the plan to cover past service benefits. Your committee, because the demands of sufferers throughout the world resulting from the war have proved so pressing just at this time, realized after the first few weeks of their efforts that such a goal was impracticable of attainment at the moment and recommended to the trustees its reduction to $100,000, leaving the larger figure as the amount ultimately to be raised. Of this amount $75,000 will constitute the cash payment to cover past benefits. By paying this lump sum instead of spreading the payments over twenty years, heavy yearly interest charges are avoided. The remaining $25,000 of the present goal of $100,000 will care for such needs as may arise for several years in such specific cases as the insurance plan does not cover. The trustees also contemplate adding to the current yearly budget a sufficient sum to cover the charges of future service annuities. This will be made possible through economies in operation which are being worked out in the current operating costs of the Church. Clearly, this does not dispose permanently of the problem. However, it has seemed to the trustees the best solution possible until the war clouds pass and the balance of the fund required to put it on a permanent basis can be secured.

Here is another letter from one of the contributors to the fund. May the example of the writer of this letter move those who have not yet contributed to do so on a basis relatively as generous:

> "It gives me much pleasure to know there is to be a Retirement Fund for the faithful, fine group who serve so beautifully the needs of The Riverside Church. Unfortunately I am 'past 80' and will soon be compelled to enter an Ancient's Home. So, much to my regret, I can do no more than send the ten dollars enclosed just to place my goodwill, *and hope for great additions from other members.*"

Additions to the fund since our last report, including one contribution of $5,000, bring the total to $89,140, leaving a balance of $10,860 still to be raised.

THE ONE HUNDREDTH
ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

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NURSERY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN THE CHURCH YARD

Riverside Church and Columbia Campus

ROBERT G. ANDRUS
Counselor to Protestant Students
at Columbia University

VISITORS to The Riverside Church frequently ask about our relations with the neighboring institutions on The Hill. In church circles across the country the question of how a church situated close to a college campus can have an effective place in the student life is constantly discussed. No one plan has been devised that will suit all situations. In many cases the "Student Pastor" relationship seems to work to best advantage. The local churches in such cases coöperate with the resident Student Pastor, placing their facilities at his disposal for student programs, and in many other ways expressing the goodwill of the church and its people. In some colleges the work is sponsored directly by the Intercollegiate Branch of the Y. M. C. A., and in others a program similar to the Campus Y. M. C. A. idea is carried on by locally directed student "Associations."

At Columbia University the "Counselor to Protestant Students," Rev. Robert G. Andrus, coöperates with the Chaplain of the University, and has also the active assistance of a Lutheran clergyman and a Union Seminary student on a part-time basis. Mr. Andrus has recently written a brief account of his work for the information of the Benevolence Committee of the Church. In quoting from it we can hear a part of the story directly from the Counselor himself. He writes, "The University Christian Association, which is the principal organized expression of the Protestant student religious life of Columbia, has its headquarters in Earl Hall. This building, erected in 1902 as a gift by William Earl Dodge 'That Religion and learning might go hand in hand and character grown with Knowledge,' is also used by the Roman Catholic and Jewish students. In addition to the offices of the Chaplain and the Religious Counselors, the building contains a public lounge, an excellent room for small socials and meetings, now called the Dodge Memorial Room, and an auditorium with a capacity of four hundred, suitable for dances and meetings. Just this fall the interior of Earl Hall has been redecorated with

funds raised by an Alumni Interfaith Committee. This undertaking followed the shifting of the University Theater Group to a temporary building of their own which has restored Earl Hall as a religious activities center.

"The Christian Association program reaches from devotional study groups on the fundamentals of the Christian Faith to discussion of and reaction on current problems. This program is rounded out by appropriate social activities. A prominent U. C. A. feature is the Open House held every Thursday afternoon. Anywhere from sixty-five to one hundred students gather in the Dodge Room for a social hour followed by a discussion under a wide variety of Christian leaders.

"While the University Christian Association is the Protestant Counselor's main interest, his primary responsibility is to look after the spiritual welfare of the thirteen hundred Protestant undergraduates and more than seven thousand graduate students. In this he coöperates closely with the Chaplain of the University and has the assistance of a Lutheran clergyman and a seminary student working as part-time associates. While we only scratch the surface of the graduate constituency, we do have a wide circle of friendships beyond the organized religious groups. In reaching these the U. C. A. is a valuable tool. There are many informal meetings planned for those who shy away from anything conventionally religious. The door of the Counselor's home is always open to students.

"This program at Columbia receives its entire financial support from churches and from individual contributions. The Riverside Church stands with the West End Presbyterian Church, the Board of Christian Education of the Presbyterian Church, the United Lutheran Church and the Intercollegiate Branch of the Y. M. C. A. in backing this ministry to students on Morningside Heights. And it is a unique fellowship. On most of the great university campuses of America the various denominational boards maintain separate ministries. At Columbia we are engaged in an experiment wherein the churches support a staff for a United Student Christian Community. It is from just such coöperation for the common good that the United Church for which we all pray will come into being."

This story of Mr. Andrus and the University Christian Association pretty well covers the field in so far as work on the campus is concerned, but it would be quite unfair to the reality of the matter to leave the question with which we began this story without reference to the many other ways in which the Church and the University get together. It is one of the outstanding privileges of Riverside Church to have a large number of faculty members and officers of the university and their families in our membership, on our official boards and committees, in our Church School classes, and particularly as a highly stimulating and challenging factor in the make-up of our congregation from week to week.

Then, too, the students are finding paths to follow that take them safely across Broadway and into our building for various appointments. At first we were disposed to think that uptown Broadway was about the widest street in the world and that the busy students never would negotiate its crossing. But now their friendly presence is most apparent as they come and go, singly and

(*Concluded on page 38*)

Needlework at Riverside

THANKSGIVING DAY has just passed as this report goes to print, and there is thanksgiving truly in the hearts of the Directors of the Riverside Church Section of the Needlework Guild of America for the generosity of our church members and their friends who made it possible for us to assemble and distribute a larger number of new garments and household linens than ever before in our existence of ten years.

We are deeply grateful, too, to the faithful members of the Volunteer Sewing Group of our Women's Bible Class who by their splendid and devoted service have made 1,325 articles to complete forty infants' layettes as well as many children's dresses and rompers.

In all, our 1940 collection included 3,470 articles and they were divided as follows among welfare projects in which our church is interested:

Baptist Educational Center	227
Henry Street Visiting Nurse Service	850
Judson Health Center	196
Judson Neighborhood House	200
New York Urban League	202
The Neighborhood House	300
Church Home Relief	1,495
	3,470

Towards New York Branch Maintenance $21.00

The last mentioned undertaking includes the clients of the Community Service Society and garments allocated to it are distributed by Mrs. William M. Crane, Mrs. Joseph E. Winchell, Mrs. Katherine Willard Eddy and Miss Mary E. Downs.

And now since this article is written in the spirit of Thanksgiving, may I not properly include the gratitude of those final recipients whose hearts were as surely warmed by your generous impulse as were their bodies by your useful and attractive gifts!

Respectfully submitted,
MRS. EDWARD H. GREEN,
President.

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Hymn for December

Immortal Love, forever full,
  Forever flowing free,
Forever shared, forever whole,
  A never-ebbing sea!

We may not climb the heavenly steeps
  To bring the Lord Christ down;
In vain we search the lowest deeps,
  For him no depths can drown.

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
  A present help is he;
And faith has still its Olivet,
  And love its Galilee.

The healing of his seamless dress
  Is by our beds of pain;
We touch him in life's throng and press,
  And we are whole again.

Through him the first fond prayers are said
  Our lips of childhood frame,
The last low whispers of our dead
  Are burdened with his name.

O Lord and Master of us all,
  Whate'er our name or sign,
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
  We test our lives by thine.

John Greenleaf Whittier, the "Quaker poet," was the author of this hymn. Whittier, a farmer boy and later a shoemaker, secured only a meager education before he started on the journalistic road in which he showed such ability. In his later life he developed into "one of the most truly characteristic of our American poets." The above verses were written in 1866.

The tune is an arrangement from William Vincent Wallace's "Ye Winds That Waft." Wallace (1814-1865) was the son of an Irish bandmaster and developed into an outstanding violinist and composer. His life was an adventurous one, including wanderings to many parts of the earth, at one time complete loss of his savings through the failure of a New York piano firm, and following closely upon this his narrow escape from death in a steamboat explosion. He died in France at the age of fifty-one.

The Latchstring

Church Choirs to Unite December 22

Mr. Kinsley has planned a service for Sunday afternoon, December 22, which will be an innovation in the Ministry of Music series. It will be an all-church program with three volunteer choruses from organizations in the church collaborating with the regular choir. The Riverside Guild Chorus, the Men's Class Chorus, and the Women's Class Chorus will participate. The augmented choir will bring together approximately 125 voices. It will be the first occasion in the experience of The Riverside Church when volunteer choruses from the membership of the congregation will be heard in a regular church service. These three choruses have been serving their respective organizations for a number of years and have been constantly improving as musical organizations. Mr. Judson League, who directs the Men's Chorus, Mrs. Otho G. Cartwright, the leader of the Women's Chorus, and Mr. Dabney Gettel of The Riverside Guild Chorus have done splendid work in bringing their respective organizations up to the point where they can share with the trained choir of the church in this service under the direction of Mr. Kinsley.

▽

Long Island Oratorio Society to Appear on December 29 in Handel's "Messiah"

This great oratorio has probably been sung more times than any other similar work. The participating of the Long Island Oratorio Society, under the direction of Mr. Maurice Garabrant, has been arranged. This well-known organization will unite with the Riverside Choir in singing the Christmas portions of the oratorio, closing the service with the Hallelujah Chorus.

▽

The Church School Also Has a Choir

While we are stressing the special church services in which our volunteer choruses are to appear, we want to introduce still another singing group that is developing in our midst. It is the Church School Choir which has a regular part in the worship services of the School on Sunday mornings. From "The Megaphone," Church School publication, we have clipped the following "Editorial." It tells its own story.

"Among the varied activities of Riverside the choir holds a prominent if not publicized position but we should remember the importance of the choir to the department and to our worship services.

"Mr. Moseley works every Sunday from nine to nine-thirty with the choir in order to familiarize its members with the music of the worship service. Occasionally Saturday rehearsals are held in order to prepare special anthems and programs.

"Last Sunday an anthem solo was sung by Helen Albrecht and Anne Jordan, with the whole choir in on chorus parts.

"We must admit that such music adds much to the beauty of a service so a vote of thanks to the choir for their

willing contribution, and above all to Mr. Moseley for his immeasurable help to us all."

▽

A Speakers' Group

Under this heading Raymond Z. Fahs, Frank Johnson and Raleigh Dodson are carrying on a program every Tuesday night, with only an occasional exception when an "all-class" or an "all-church" activity calls for a suspension of group meetings. The service goes on from October through May, or we might say, goes on and on. All men are invited to join these good fellows in their seriously friendly endeavors. One need not fear that they will run out of ammunition. They are set to keep the men interested and to get real values out of the effort. It's a "give and take" class in public speaking, and they live up to their philosophy. Here are a few of the more than fifty topics which these men, you among them if you attend, will be called upon to present, discuss, elucidate, and conclude. They are adamant on the matter of conclusions. A speaker can begin most anywhere, but he is forced to conclude on time, and on short time too.

Here are some subjects:

Making the best of recreation and habits.
How I use my memory and imagination.
How I like to feel and what I do about it.
Things I appreciate and how.
How I make choices.
What I like in the theater.
Buying and selling.
Justice and fair play.

And so on, and so on, but not far into the night. Adjournment is always by the clock.

▽

An item in a recent issue of the *Ushers' Bulletin* would be rather amazing information for the people who now and then ask leading questions about the company of more than eighty men who serve as ushers in the service of Riverside Church. Often we are asked, rather skeptically, "Are they really volunteers?" Well, the item in the *Bulletin* reads as follows: "*Dues*—There are still a score of members who have not yet collected their receipts from our treasurer, Paul Van Dyke. Won't you see him today or mail him a check?" Yes, they are volunteers, and not only that—they pay for the privilege.

▽

Because of its obvious appropriateness for this year we reprint the Christmas Greeting written in 1932 by Dr. Fosdick. It appears as our frontispiece in this issue.

▽

RIVERSIDE CHURCH AND COLUMBIA CAMPUS

(Concluded from page 34)

in groups, particularly in connection with the active use they are now making of our bowling alleys. Another opportunity for meeting them will be the occasion, only a few days away as we write this, when the Columbia football squad will be entertained at dinner by the Men's Class, and will remain to share the Tuesday evening program.

We submit this presentation of the coöperation with the campus at which we have arrived with this reminder. Its continued success and growth involves primarily a continued attitude of goodwill and interest on our part as neighbors. But it also means that to sustain it properly and adequately, our people must remember that the Church Benevolence Budget must be maintained.

T. RAYMOND ST. JOHN

Chairman, Board of Deacons

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T. RAYMOND ST. JOHN, CHAIRMAN

The Board of Deacons have adopted a new policy with respect to their presiding officer. Heretofore the minister of the church has been the chairman of the Board. This practice has now been discontinued, and the Board will elect a chairman each year from its own membership. The ministers of course continue to sit with the Board of Deacons as they do with the Board of Trustees. Their influence with the Board is no whit less than it was before. The change to lay leadership will not greatly change the situation inside the Board.

It is very appropriate, however, and altogether logical that at this time when the respective fields of activity of the two official boards are being redefined somewhat, and increased responsibility is being passed on to the Board of Deacons, this particular change has been made. It means that instead of having just one lay member representing the congregation as head of an official board, the Trustees, we now have two men of equal influence and prominence in the councils of the church, Mr. Albert L. Scott, President of the Board of Trustees, and Mr. T. Raymond St. John, Chairman of the Board of Deacons. Mr. St. John was elected to the chairmanship by the Board of Deacons at a special meeting on October 24. He needs no particular introduction to our members. No man among us is better known. We are here simply announcing the new plan and the first incumbent, Mr. T. Raymond St. John.

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